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AFGHANISTAN

SUCCESS STORY

Emerging Leader Steps up for Future Success

Youth are positively influenced by the Emerging Civil Society Leaders' Program through gaining knowledge for the future improvement and dialogue.



By Adiba Sadri

Ms. Elaha, during participation in the Public Speaking Skill training in Kabul on 2nd June 2015

USAID promote civil society and media engagement that enables Afghan citizens to influence policy, monitor government accountability, and serve as an advocate for political reform

The Emerging Civil Society Leaders 2015 Program is a project of the USAID supported ACEP which identified 34 young leaders with equal male and female participants from across Afghanistan. The program provides them with a number of capacity building activities.

In general Afghan youth are most often not permitted to participate in decision making or decision making processes. Traditionally, youth are deprived from speaking their mind or from having a voice in the presence of older people. The consequence of this is that they often become disheartened and reluctant to express their views in public forums or to speak in front of older people. This traditional barrier is often more of a challenge for young women than it is for men. Youth make up 65% of the total population of Afghanistan and they require training and skill development across social and political realms.

The ACEP/Emerging Civil Society Leaders' Program is a USAID funded initiative that is one of the most well-known programs among youth. The program identifies and builds knowledge for young males and females from across Afghanistan through different civic education programs. In a recent training conducted on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd June 2015 in Kabul, under the theme of *Public Speaking Skills*, participants were trained on different topics and methods in order to develop their skills on how to practice and deliver speaking in front of an audience. Ms. Elaha Danishwar is a young female emerging leader participant currently enrolled in the 2015 program. She was one of the participants who gained knowledge on how to practice delivering speech in front of others. After successful completion of the training, Ms. Elaha was invited by an organization in Herat province named *World Green Educational Association* to conduct a similar training for the organization's members. Ms. Elaha successfully conducted the training on 25th July to 30 participants (12 males and 18 females) from the aforementioned organization. This was the first practical experience for her to outreach her gained knowledge to other peers.

With similar success, Ms. Elaha expressed her happiness when she was awarded a position of Training Facilitator with *Afghan*

Women Educational Center a local organization working for gender and women capacity development. In her words;

“I don’t know how to thank USAID and the ACEP/Emerging Civil Society Leaders’ Program, for their great support to Afghan youth. Of course, their program enabled me to feel that I have future influence at the community level on different social and political issues” said Elaha.